THE PORT FOLIO,

(NEW SERIES)

BY OLIVER OLDSCHOOL, ESQ.

Various, that the mind of desultory man, studious of change and pleased with novelty, may be indulged—Cowp.

Vol. V. *Philadelphia, Saturday, May* 21, 1808. No. 21.

ORIGINAL PAPERS.

For The Port Folio.

TRAVELS.

LETTERS FROM GENEVA AND FRANCE.

Written during a residence of between two and three years in different parts of those countries, and addressed to a lady in Virginia.

(*Continued from page* 311.)

LETTER XVII.

My dear E——,

OUR stay was too short to enable us even to take a superficial view of this celebrated city; we ascended the hill however, which overhangs it, and enjoyed one of the finest prospects we had beheld in France; two navigable rivers embracing, as they approach the sides of a noble city, with a well cultivated country, and a view of the Alps surmounted by Mont Blanc. Near the spot we stood on were the remains of a Roman amphitheatre, and below was the city, in which I could trace the vestiges of civil war and jacobinical fury: the streets and bridges were, however, crowded with carriages and people, and the imagination was thus in some measure consoled for the horrours of past time by the appearances of present plenty and tranquillity. Fortunately for the present inhabitants of Lyons, the articles they have been so long in the habit of manufacturing, are of light carriage, and have been gradually brought into use by that return towards monarchy, and to the manners of a court which is now so obvious. On leaving Lyons, we followed, for a time, the direction of the Rhone, the stream of which, soon became too shallow for navigation in any but small boats, but there were evident marks of its rising at times far beyond its present limits, and extending its ravages to a great distance. It was not like the Garonne, the emblem of a gracious and bounteous sovereign, benefiting even by his occasional ex-

cesses; but of a tyrant, fierce, violent and unjust, exceeding at times all bounds, bearing off every thing before him, and then sinking again into insignificance and inutility. Quitting shortly after the direction of the Rhone, we found ourselves in a country not unlike the little Cantons of Switzerland, and reminding me very much at times of the narrow vallies and high mountains on the road from Staunton to the Sweet Springs. There were several circumstances, however, which created a very striking contrast between the back parts of Virginia, and the neighbourhood of Nanthua, where we stopped for the night; every slip of low ground, which was capable of cultivation, became a vineyard in miniature in the hands of these industrious people: no spot of good earth, even though not larger than the Spring-hill at Belvoir, remained neglected, and it was sometimes difficult to imagine, how the husbandman was ever able to reach this species of hanging garden: in addition to this difference in point of prospect, there were the houses of the peasantry, either collected in villages, or scattered along the face of the mountain, and in one spot there was a church on a projecting rock almost perpendicularly above us. The roads too were good though steep, and when we arrived at our inn, which was not until ten at night, instead of a miserable ordinary, the haunt of gamblers, there was a good fire in a comfortable room, and instead of an old fowl pulled from the roost by a drowsy negress, there was a supper of all that could be desired, and we were waited upon by the well-behaved, well-dressed and handsome daughters of the house. Nothing, as I have already observed, has proved so contrary to our expectation, as the goodness of the inns in France, and the civility of the innkeepers; their floors are not always as clean as one could wish; and we have been more than once shocked at the appearance of two or three stout men officiating as chambermaids, but their beds were invariably good. As to the individuals whom we met with on the road, or in towns, or at the theatre, I do not remember one instance of their behaving rudely, or even impolitely to us; and the circumstance of our being foreigners, which seemed as well known at first sight, as if written upon our foreheads, appeared everywhere a claim to kindness and respect. Of the revolution, and its effects, I have said nothing, except where the siege of Lyons irresistibly drew me from my purpose, not only from the difficulty of gaining information on a subject which has so cruelly divided the minds of men, but from a desire to acquire some better knowledge of the subject before I ventured to record my opinions, even in this transitory manner: I will only say, that I believe the revolution to have been favourable to the peasantry and small landholders throughout France, that as to its effects upon the administration of justice and upon literature, I believe it to have been favourable to the first, in appearance only, and to the last in part, and that I have reason to think, it has been extremely prejudicial to good morals, and fatal to commerce.

We are now, on the thirteenth of October, arrived at the last day's journey, as you must perceive, if you have traced us on the map: it was with mingled sensations that I felt myself approaching Geneva. You know through

how many vicissitudes of life I have passed since I lived at Geneva; a revolution too had taken place there, a sort of sabine marriage with France had been entered into, and I knew, that it had been preceded, and in some measure rendered indispensable, by scenes of outrage and of cruelty, to which some of my old acquaintances had fallen victims. We were anxious to see —— ———, and delightful as the journey had been, were not sorry that it was now drawing fast to a conclusion.

The country continued mountainous after we left Nantua, so that we proceeded slowly and I foresaw that we should lose that first distant prospect of the Lake which I had promised myself so much pleasure from; I was determined, however, not to lose the opportunity of showing my fellow travellers what is called La Perte du Rhone; the river at its confluence with the Aive near Geneva is upwards of seventy yards over, and though augmented by the accession of many smaller streams as it proceeds, is confined in the neighbourhood of Lecluse, after a course of twenty miles, to a space of not more than three yards. You may judge of the rapidity, with which it now foams along, and particularly when the passage becoming still narrower, as in a funnel, is at last reduced to two feet. There have been persons, who have ventured to stand astride this horrid gulph, which gives me a better idea of a fit descent for a fury to choose, on its way to the infernal shades, than anything I have seen; I could hardly bear even to peep into it; the violence of the river has here made itself a subterraneous passage, and it is seen to rise about one hundred yards lower down, the very emblem of gentleness itself. A great many experiments have been made with different bodies, but nothing committed to the stream on one side, has ever appeared on the other, of boats which had accidentally been drifted from a distance, not a fragment was ever seen again; a poor hog was once made to undertake the passage, and has, it is to be hoped, found repose in some other world, for he has never since appeared in this: the connexion is in all probability, through winding passages which extend to a great depth. Lecluse, which is a mile or two from the Perte du Rhone, is the place, mentioned by Cæsar, as affording one of the few passages out of the country of the Helvetians, and it is impossible for any description to be more exact.

We here entered into what was probably in very remote times the basin of a very great lake, which extended in the opposite direction to the Alps, and which having successively burst itself a passage through different places, of which there are evident marks, is now shrunk to the Lake of Geneva. It was night, by the time we got into the neighbourhood of the city, I could still however, recognise several buildings, which I saw, and knew exactly where I was. A little before eight, we arrived at Secheron, which is on the banks of the Lake, about a quarter of a mile from the gates, and had the happiness to find —— ——— waiting for us. He was a little disfigured by a large cravat and a long coat, but otherwise improved in his looks, and in perfect health. And now — ———, adieu, you have had a faithful account of our expedition so far, and may rely upon my continuing to make you acquainted with everything that can interest you in our cir-

cumstances and situation: we shall make some excursions, and I shall have a great deal to say about Geneva, which is to be our home for sometime.

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LETTER XVIII.

St. Jean, 1st May, 1804.

My dear E——,

Six happy months have passed at Geneva, as happy at least as can well be in a world, where, with the most reasonable intentions, and the most moderate views, we are still liable to disappointments, and where the possession of all that can render life desirable, still leaves us exposed to the infirmities of human nature.

The inn at Secheron is large and commodious, and has a garden, which leads down to the Lake; it was at no late hour of the next day, as you may suppose, that I walked along this slope, and leaning on the low wall which serves as a barrier against the water, surveyed the interesting scene before me: the map of Switzerland, which, I take for granted, is now spread on your table, exhibits the Lake of Geneva as approaching in some degree the shape of a half moon: it is formed, as you may perceive, by the Rhone, which enters violently with its turbid waters at one extremity, fills an immense basin of sixty miles in length, by about ten in the widest part in breadth, and having devested itself of all impurities, reassumes, as by a sort of resurrection, in the shape of a clear and unpolluted stream, its course towards the Mediterranean: though far inferiour in point of size to the lakes of America, and by no means dignified, as they are, with the appearance of vessels, large enough for all the purposes of extensive commerce, armed occasionally for war, and navigated as on the ocean, it is still an important and an interesting object. I will say nothing to you, at present, of the people who inhabit its shores, nor of the birds which are found upon its banks, nor of the fish which it produces, nor of the storms which it is sometimes agitated by, nor of its frightful depth: figure to yourself, that I was looking down upon it from a terrace, where the breadth is contracted to about a quarter of a mile; on the left, was an expanse, which appeared as an arm of the sea, not unlike the Sound between Long Island, and the Connecticut shore; to the right, was the ancient and venerable city of Geneva, as if rising from the bosom of the water, a city so long the seat of liberty, and still the seat of literature, and to me so replete with remembrance of my younger days, and before me on the opposite side, was a shore covered with country seats, in the midst of orchards and vineyards, rising by a gentle swell into mountains; the forms of which were as familiar to my mind as the features of a long-lost friend; and over these, at a distance, were the snows of the lofty Alps, and above these was Mont Blanc.

I shall have occasion hereafter to enter into a more particular description of this mighty mountain, and shall be able to do so the more correctly, from its having been so generally an object of attention; it attracted, in a very particular degree, that of the celebrated Monsieur de Saussure, who, after repeated attempts, was, at length, so fortunate as to reach the summit of the mountain, and to feel himself for a time, on the most elevated spot of all Europe, at the distance of nearly three miles

perpendicular from the surface of the sea, or twelve thousand one hundred and seventy-two feet above the village at its base. It happens to very few individuals that they are able to return after a lapse of so many years, and from so distant a spot of the earth, to the scenes of their early youth, and the satisfaction arising from such an event in my life was accompanied with the agreeable circumstance of having so much of my family with me, and with the reflection, that health and amusement, and the means of a liberal education, were here to be found united in one spot.

The next day was employed in looking out for apartments, which with the assistance of an old friend, were very soon procured, and at no great expense, but as some days would unavoidably intervene, before we could be put in possession of them, we thought it would be best to employ the interval in making an excursion to the extremity of the Lake. On the eighteenth of October, therefore, after having established —— —— at a school, with very respectable people, on whose attention to her I could depend, we set out, in a hired carriage, and moved slowly along the banks of the Lake, into the Pays de Vaud. In the little space of the three or four first miles, there occurred many interesting recollections. We first passed at the foot of the hill of Chambeisi, where I lived a year in company with my friend Muller, now a distinguished name in Germany, and in sight of an old family mansion, where I remembered having been kindly and hospitably received; the master and mistress of the house are no longer living, but I had the satisfaction to learn that their place in society has been worthily supplied by several families of their descendants. We, shortly after, passed in sight of the village of Genthod, where my friend Muller and I resided a year, and found ourselves blest in the protection, the instruction, and the example of Mr. Bonnet, whose goodness of heart and mildness of disposition gained him as many friends, as his extensive erudition, and his various literary productions created admirers. Monsieur and Madame Bonnet have been dead for some years, but their names will live forever; as long at least as wisdom and virtue are in esteem, or science continues to be revered. The works by which Monsieur Bonnet was first known, were topicks of Natural History, the reproduction of plants and animals, the use of leaves to trees, (a subject connected with some of the most important experiments on the nature of the atmosphere we breathe) and on the private economy of insects, either living singly, or in a species of commonwealth. His style and manner of writing on these seemingly less important subjects, were such as to captivate the attention, whilst he gratified the curiosity, and led the mind of his reader along a variety of natural representations, from the knowledge of creation up to the adoration of the Creator himself. A spider defending its future offspring in the shape of eggs, or a silkworm finding its way home, as Theseus did out of the labyrinth, became the subjects almost of our regard; and a yard or two of sand, diversified with small holes, in the shape of funnels, are converted into a land of wonders, when we find that at the bottom of each there lurks a monster, with means of

destruction far more formidable in description than are possessed by any of those that wander over the deserts of Africa; who, with two pointed horns, and twelve eyes, and the knowledge of forming pitfalls to ensnare his prey, and a coat of mail, is in want of nothing but of size, to make himself the terrour of all mankind.

Mr. Bonnet's sight, which had never been good, without the assistance of glasses, began to fail him at an early period of his life, and his sense of hearing had always been in some degree deficient: the strength and vigour of his mind, therefore, very naturally led him to subjects of meditation, in the discussion of which, the clearness and precision of his ideas, the order and method of his argument, the unadorned, yet beautiful simplicity of his style, the warmth of universal good will, and the glow of cheerful piety, are as conspicuous as in his earlier productions. How far we are to trust to the truth of that mechanical explanation of the operation of our senses upon the brain, and consequently on the soul of man, which Mr. Bonnet gives, I cannot pretend to say, but it is certainly the best defence against those visual and auricular delusions, which all of us are subject to, and which have sometimes shaken the strongest minds. You know how ridiculous the celebrated Dr. Johnson made himself in his conversations about ghosts, and on fancying that he had heard himself called.

Seated, as it were, apart from the prejudices of man, Mr. Bonnet casts a bold and rapid view over creation; a connexion is explored from the lowest class of organized beings up to the insect that we tread upon, from the insect up to man, from man to God: the goodness of his heart, aided by the powers of argument, made him see and enabled him to point out a progress of perfection in this mighty chain, the various parts of which, as far as human knowledge can avail, were familiar to him: his religion was, what has been well expressed the sunshine of the mind, it decorated every action of his life, it warmed his heart to universal benevolence, and rendered him anxious to carry the light of human reason as far as possible, from a wish to explain how all men of all religions thought alike, and that words and not things divided them.

The subjects which he treated, led him naturally to speak of our existence in a future state, and here, standing as it were on the brink of eternity, he ventures, with an imagination warmed by the pursuits of his earlier years, to cast a look into the abyss, and points out to his fellow creatures in the Chrysalis become an inhabitant of the air, and borne up by newly-acquired wings in another region, an emblem of never-failing hope and consolation.

It is melancholy to think that this good and enlightened man should have been on some occasions, during the last months of his life, himself a victim of that delusion of the senses, which his Philosophy had taught others to guard against. Reclining on his bed in the evening he perceived, as he supposed, his old and faithful servant and secretary come gently into the room, and carry off a packet of papers from a table near him; to convince him that he had not seen him was difficult, as he had the evidence, as he supposed, of his senses, and to tell him of the delusion he had laboured under, might have been attended

with mortifying, and therefore, dangerous reflections to a person already weakened by a long disorder; the secretary was represented, therefore, as having acknowledged the impropriety of his conduct, and as soliciting forgiveness; and the best likeness I have ever seen of Mr. Bonnet, represents him as stretching out his hands in the act of pronouncing these words so worthy of him, "Ah! if he repents, let him come to me, every thing is forgotten."

On entering into this detail of the charrcter of Mr. Bonnet, I have thought rather of gratifying my own feelings, in paying this tribute of gratitude to his memory, than of amusing you; you also, however, would have loved this good man, the mildness and cheerfulness of his countenance would have won you heart at once; and you would have been delighted with his conversation, which he could accommodate to all ages and to every degree of knowledge.

POLITE LITERATURE.

LETTERS FROM BRUTUS.

LETTER VI.

To the Right Honourable Edmund Burke.

SIR,

When I some time ago took occasion to address you, I recommended, with an honest wish for your fame, the application of your talents to nobler objects than the contentions of party politicks, "the struggle for place, or the bickerings of faction." I called upon you to exert the powers you are acknowledged to possess, "the force of a scholar's style, the richness of a poet's imagination, to correct the errours or expose the abuses of publick measures." It flatters me to see that you have fulfilled the wish I then formed on your behalf: your treatise on the French Revolution has evinced the fullest possession of your abilities, and showed them pointed to an object of such magnitude in the history of mankind, as fully deserved to call them forth.

In this performance you have preserved all the sensibility, bordering on enthusiasm, which has been always characteristick of your happiest political appearances. Feeling as a Christian for religion, as a gentleman for honourable distinction, as a man for the distresses of the unfortunate, you will be pardoned for painting in strong, and perhaps exaggerated colours, the injustice which, in your opinion, all of them have suffered from the present Democracy of France. Many of your readers will coincide with your opinions; all of them will relish your wit and your imagery; your style, even in its defects, will find warm admirers: these decorations of your work I will not stop to criticise or to applaud; I have certainly found more, much more room for applause than for criticism; but I will venture a few remarks which have struck me, in a first perusal of your work, on some of its general principles, and its representation of that very striking event of which it treats.

Nothing seems to me more just than your development of the great leading truths of our constitution, and of that renewal or restoration of its principles which took place at the revolution in 1688. I have heard that this part of your work has surprised and hurt some of your Whig friends and admirers. But I confess that I have not been able to find in it any offence against the principles of reasonable Whiggism; if, as a party-man you have sometimes been considered as professing a zeal in that respect, beyond the moderation of your present performance, it will remain to be determined on which side truth and reason lies; and whether the sober confession of your faith, in this publication, be an apostacy or a conversion.

In treating of the proceedings of the National Assembly of France, and of the new constitution which they wish to establish, you do not seem quite so moderate and impartial. The government of a great nation is a machine of so much complexity, that objections, and those too of magnitude, will easily occur to a mind less acute, and less inventive than yours. Objections will arise more easily against the operations of a republican, or anything near a republican government, than against those of a monarchy.—Absolute power is that pervading energy which simplifies everything. Give it but the adjuncts of wisdom, justice and benevolence, and nothing is so delightful to imagination. You know, Sir, that mythology and poetry have always adopted it, because in their hands it is simple, beautiful, and sublime. The difficulty of modelling a new government of this sort is one great reason why reformers have, as you observe, generally contented themselves with only improving on the old system, and have kept as much of that remaining as the immediate feeling of oppression or inconvenience would allow. But the change must always be greater in proportion to the depravity of the former government. The constitution of England, when our ancestors reestablished it at the Revolution, had sustained some injuries from the weakness or bigotry of the monarch, which could be removed without much violence; that of France had abuses inherent in its principle which could not so easily be done away. To use your own favourite allusion, the English constitution had only suffered some dilapidations which it was not difficult to repair: the French was rotten at the foundation, and it required a great deal of pulling down to remedy the mischief.

You allow nothing to the violence inseparable from the application of this remedy. You forget the resistance of the king to the first proceedings of the National Assembly, which unavoidably produced this violence; the dismission of M. Neckar; the manifesto from Versailles; the army of Marshall Broglio. Those measures of strong coercion were necessarily opposed by exertions of equal force; and in such conflicts, in the shock of heated and contending parties, not only delicacy and decorum, but even justice and humanity are sometimes forgotten. Even after the contest is at an end, the principle of violence will continue to operate; the storm may have ceased, but the swell of the ocean will remain.

With the people especially, that violence will continue, and new authority will not easily be able to repress it. The national quickness and vivacity of France runs out easily into extremes; the sentiment of the moment catches with rapidity, and hurries into excess. There is a sentiment, even of cruelty, among the French, which has often been remarked with astonishment in so civilized a people. It was this sentiment which prompted their inhuman applause, when Damien's first shriek attested the skill of the executioner. They looked on the assassin of their king, and uttered this barbarous plaudit at his tortures. 'Twas a *Vive le Roi* in a savage style; that *Vive le Roi* which made them of old forget their country; you need not wonder that, at present, the *Vive la nation* makes them forget their King.

Yet those outrages, which every good man like you must regret, to which feeling and eloquence like yours can give so much dramatick effect, have not, perhaps, been so frequent, or so great as might have been expected in a period of such commotion and tumult. The force that could wrench its sceptre from despotism could be exerted with the ease and smoothness of regular and ordinary power. If it sometimes shook the pillars of justice, if it sometimes loosened the bonds of humanity, the

transient evil must be endured for the sake of the future permanent good. If France shall ultimately obtain freedom at no greater expense than the blood which has already been spilt, though individuals may have to mourn their private losses, the publick cannot repent of the purchase.

But does humanity never speak on the other side of the question, nor think of what those wretches suffered, on whom the former government wrecked its vengeance uncontroled? Their sufferings, indeed, were not seen in the streets, nor related in Journals; for the dungeons of the Bastile and of the Castle of Vincennes, were closed upon their miseries. But have you, Sir, whose researches have travelled so far into Asia for stories of oppression, never heard of those at your door? You will tell us, as the other defenders of the French Monarchy have done, of the infrequency of such instances. But in the system of government, it is not what is done, but what may be done, that wisdom and foresight look to.—You talk of the mildness of Louis XVI, you speak with a bombastick rapture of the charms of his Queen: the poets of Augustus, with a taste as elegant, and a style somewhat chaster than yours, could tell us of the mildness and munificence of his reign; but that power which in him was mildness and munificence, in his successours was tyranny and murder.

The circle that sees and can best talk of kings, is a narrow and partial one; and the delegated power of the Sovereign is often mischievous in the extreme, while he, from whom it flows, is amiable and beneficent. Kings may be praised by poets, and idolized by courtiers, even without the aid of much imagination or flattery, while their people are groaning under the oppressions of their government. On such testimony Louis XVI. has been celebrated as the most liberal, the most magnificent, the greatest of Monarchs; the miseries of millions of his subjects make no figure in his history, or at least in the common and current ideas of his history. To them no painter has given colour, no poet description; they make no part of the pedestal in the statue of the *Place des Victoires*.

The distresses of the lower orders of the people, the want of food, of cloathing, of fuel, are not calculated to figure in painting and sculpture, to melt in poetry, or to rouse in eloquence. These orders, however, are what political and philosophical truth must own to be the nation. It was the misfortune in France, that the manners modelled by the form of government, established a sort of contempt for every individual, who had not rank and fashion to recommend him. This mode of thinking was not the less fatal, and was much less easy to be corrected for its really not being highly censurable in those who indulged it. It was not the effect of selfishness and inhumanity; it arose from habit merely; it was worn by a man of the court like his new suit, without any other consideration than that his companions had the same. His sphere of connexion with mankind reached no farther than a few parties of rank and fashion, whom he called the world. The twenty millions of Frenchmen, who were not of these parties, went for nothing in the account. The men of superiour rank who thought thus, were in general polite, obliging, honourable, and brave. Some of them, whom strangers were most likely to see, were possessed also of the more solid and estimable qualities of taste, of sentiment, of information. But they still retained the aristocratick prejudices of their order. These are, indeed, not unnatural to minds of a certain refinement. The heroism of knight errantry, the gallantry of a cavalier, the spirit of hereditary nobility, all these interest the feelings and captivate the imagination. We are, therefore, not surprised, that you, Sir, should be seduced by them.

It is not, perhaps, unfair to bring the very abasement which the nobility of France has suffered, in proof of

its having somewhat deserved that abasement. That this great and numerous body, possessed for so many centuries of its elevated station, with so much power, and so much property to attach men's interests, with all its present and all its traditionary grandeur to overawe their minds; that such a body should have shrunk into annihilation without a struggle, is pretty strong evidence of its having lost, by some demerit, that influence which it should have had in the country; that it held the people in a vassalage intolerably oppressive, and had exercised all the feudal tyranny without having gained any of the feudal attachment.

A similar argument may be brought with regard to the church. The higher ecclesiasticks must have forfeited the esteem and regard of their own subordinate clergy, and of the people, before their power and their domains could have been wrested from them, without the impression of sacrilege or impiety, almost without the idea of injustice. Had they claimed veneration by their sanctity, or good will by their benevolence, the reverence, or the love of the people, would have felt and resented the infringment on their possessions. The people would have complained from sentiment, but it would have still been a question how far they complained with reason. The property of the church certainly stood on a very different footing from that of an hereditary descendible estate. No man is born Archbishop of Paris, or Abbé of St. Germains. Their great incomes were a stipendiary allowance, though they arose from the possession of land. The function of ecclesiastical is more sacred than that of temporal offices; but if their emoluments are beyond the abilities of the state, or if any of those religious offices are entirely unnecessary, it may fairly enough be argued, that the power of resumption of the ancient stipends, or of abolition of the ancient offices, lies with the people. Even if it were to be granted that all the revenues of the church had been laid out in the best possible way, yet the charity of the state, like the charity of individuals, must be a secondary consideration to its own immediate subsistence or support. State necessity called for retrenchments and for imposts. Had the King retained that power which this very necessity tended to overthrow, he would probably have wrung some more millions of livres from the poverty of the people. Was it much to be regretted that his successours in that power found a resource in the exorbitant wealth of the church?

I easily allow for your feelings on behalf of the monastick establishments. There is a "dim religious" reverence, a tenderness for storied melancholy, which the heart and the fancy will readily acknowledge towards their "ancient solitary reign;" but the abolishment of their cold ascetick austerities, (for in a cloister there can scarcely be any virtues) will not, I believe, be considered by philosophy, (or philanthropy; if you should dislike the word philosophy) as one of the evils of the Revolution.

From you, Sir, one would hardly have expected that violent and somewhat illiberal attack on the philosophers and men of letters in France which your book contains. Do you really, in your cooler judgment, believe, that the world has gained nothing by their labours? Has your sympathy in the pride or prosperity of mankind found nothing with which it could congratulate itself in all the increased knowledge and humanity of the present century, for a part of which we are indebted to the men whom your zeal in this argument has condemned in the gross? Would you forego all the discoveries of their science, all the productions of their genius, to retire again into the shade of that gloomy superstition which your fancy has hallowed? In all ages philosophers have been sceptical, and wits licentious: but it is

not like the liberality of Mr. B. to proscribe philosophy and wit in a peevish indulgence of his aversion to scepticism and licentiousness.

As I am not a pleader so determined for one of the parties in this great question as you, Sir, I will freely confess, that in the opinion of thinking and impartial men, there are, in the present state of France, considerable abuses, and that in the prospect of her future condition, there are to be foreseen much difficulty and danger. In some of the members of her National Assembly there is a want of virtue, in more there is a want of wisdom, and in a still greater number a want of moderation; while in the aggregate body there is a deficiency of power to enable it always to adopt the best measures, or to enforce those which it has found a necessity of adopting. From the imposition and collection of the revenue, from the construction of the inferiour municipal jurisdictions, but especially from the situation of the army, they are threatened with the overthrow of all they have done in correction of the old, or in the establishment of the new constitution. But many of the friends of mankind will hope, as certainly all of them must wish, that all those dangers may be avoided and those difficulties overcome; that the wisdom of the enlightened, and the virtue of the good among them, may succeed in establishing, though not a perfect or an unexceptionable government, one at least more consonant to the natural rights (for the expression, after all their abuse, and your ridicule, is still in itself a good one) and more friendly to the happiness of man than that which they have abolished.

Your objections are stated when the new constitutions are yet in their beginning, before the effects of their general operation can be seen, or the errours in their detail corrected. You write with the decision of a supposed perfect knowledge of the present circumstances, and predict with a perfect confidence of the future. A little more diffidence in opinion, and a little more reserve in expression, might have been safer, as well as more conciliating. One consideration should have especially induced this, which must have great weight in a calm and dispassionate view of this whole business. The bulk of the people seem to be satisfied with the Revolution. After a considerable time to cool from the fervour of newly acquired freedom, a great majority of the nation have, on trying occasions, declared for, and supported the measures of the National Assembly. It is bold in an individual foreigner, however able and enlightened, to arraign the measures which so general a suffrage of the people, whose interest they concern, has sanctioned.

While I venture these remarks on your performance, I mean not to depreciate its merit, or to doubt the goodness of those motives with which it was written. I feel all its genius and its ability, with that partiality which is inspired by its virtue and its benevolence. This is an advantage which the writings of its authour, in general, possess. The defects of his character are pardoned like the defects of his writings, because they proceed rather from the extreme of estimable qualities, than from the want of them; from overstrained feeling, from mistaken humanity, from the zeal of right pushed almost to fanaticism.

With me, Sir, the regret of such defects is always attended by a wish for their correction, and a hope of the usefulness of those talents by which they are accompanied. From the spirit of your present performance, I anticipate a conduct beneficial to the community. I see in it a dread of the inconsiderate desire of reform; a jealousy of needless innovation, which it seems to me extremely useful to keep awake at the present time. Even when the outcry for change and innovation is honest, it may be hurtful; but if it is only the cloak of

profligate self interest, or inordinate ambition, who for their own private advantage would risk the peace and prosperity of the country, it is doubly to be dreaded. It is not from the mean or desperate tools of sedition that the country has most to fear, but from more artful and more respectable partizans, whose abilities for mischief hide their inclination for it. To you, Sir, and other virtuous citizens, the publick looks for protection against such enemies. If faction should at any time wish to corrupt our freedom into anarchy, to usurp the just prerogatives of the Crown, or to infringe the rights of the people, from you, Sir, we shall expect their defence. With moderate and virtuous men, the present performance will be a guarantee for your conduct, they will figure you laying your hand upon this book, swearing loyalty to your king, and fidelity to the constitution; pledging yourself as attached to no principles so much as to those of genuine patriotism and publick virtue; as subservient to the interests of no party in opposition to those of your country.

BRUTUS.

For The Port Folio.

POLITE LITERATURE.

(*Continued from page* 316.)

According to my last essay, self-love under a certain definition, is admitted to be the ruling principle of human nature; and it is consequently inferred, that the degree of human virtue is not to be determined by our greater or less tendency to self gratification, but by the route in which this gratification is sought. Certainly of all paths by which this is attained, none are more worthy of investigation, than those which lead to love, friendship, and natural affection. To pursue the influence of self-love through all the windings by which effects so favourable to happiness are produced, is a task cheerfully undertaken in the following essay; which I conceive to contain the theory of human attachments, in all the forms abovementioned.

When the governing impressions of different beings, tend at the same time to the gratification of each one severally, and mutually to that of each other, a coincidence may be said to take place in their self-love. This may be considered as the sole cause of human attachments, which must vary in their durability, force, and elevation, according to the peculiarities of the coincidence, to which they owe their existence.

Hence the display of all the various contingencies, wherein the self-love of one being may coincide with that of another, will develop the various, and apparently intricate channels of human affection.

The investigation of the sources of a coincidence, so influential on the happiness of those, who most deserve to be happy, were well worth our time. They will be found to be immediate, and intermediate, real and imaginary, some of them durable, but most of them transient.

That coincidence of self-love may be called intermediate, which results from similar attraction to the same object, or pursuit, whence there ensues common convenience, safety or success. In this case the interest excited by the common point of attraction, is associated with every object by which it is surrounded, and particularly with the living objects; and we imagine that we experience a direct attachment, whereas it is only intermediate; being of similar

origin with that gregarious sensation, which is the bond of union among flocks and herds, and which arises from the identity of food, and the necessity of mutual protection. For though the attachments thus subsisting between these lower orders of the creation, be more crude, and even more versatile and transitory, than are the mass of ours; this is the result not of any difference in the cause, but of the inferiority of the nature subjected to its influence.

Friendship resulting from this intermediate coincidence of self-love, is very common among soldiers, sailors, sportsmen and debauchees, and is also to be found in striking colours, among such as belong to the same art, trade, or profession, where there is no competition of pecuniary interest. When this takes place, dislike and even hatred are apt to arise, as an opposition of self-love must ensue.

Hence I imagine that friendship will be found more frequently to exist between apprentices than journeymen; between the latter than their employers; also more among soldiers fighting for liberty, or glory, than those who fight for plunder, among sailors serving on board men of war, than those who serve in privateers; among sportsmen who hunt for amusement, than hunters who pursue their game for emolument, and that the friendship of the debauchee is rarely found among those, whose wealth does not afford ample means of satiety. The poor sot is in general solitary, as the partition of his bottle, would more disappoint his self-love, than the power of association, or the interchange of ideas could possibly gratify it.

From this source also arises our attachment to our country, or to a successful chief, which is never so strong as when we are in foreign countries, or times of national danger: for as under such circumstances we feel a strong opposition between our self-love, and that of foreigners; the coincidence of our feelings with those of our countrymen, is the more enforced.

That more universal species of conjugal affection, which being supported by community of interest, and offspring, strengthens as much after marriage, or more than before it, differs not in its origin from the attachments just described; but in the superiour sanctity, force, and tenderness of the ties, which draw the parties towards those common objects, wherein their self-love is coincident, being a more elevated species, of the same genus.

As among the more exalted consequences of this source of attachment, we must consider filial affection, and that arising between brothers and sisters.

The coincidence of our self-love, with that of our parents, is one of our earliest impressions. The tie thus originating, is soon strengthened by the discovery of our inferiority and dependence: and though the sense of this decays with education, and progression to maturity, impressions are still left more or less durable, according to the excellence of our heart, and the merit of our parent. And even where these early impressions, are wholly eradicated, vanity, pride, self estimation, and the opinion of the world, must still preserve a coincidence between the self-love of the child, and that of the authours of his existence.

But however it may subsequently diminish, during infancy filial affection is the strongest sentiment

of which we are conscious. Hence it is the primary cause of affection between children of the same parents; in regard to whose welfare, they must often experience a coincidence of pleasing, and painful emotions. But in many other respects they must have a unity of self-interest, which must render many of their feelings, at the same time individually, and mutually interesting: and as they advance in years, a coincidence of self-love arises in a concurrent disposition, to exalt their common pretensions, to respectability of birth; and from the discovery that their vices, and virtues, are partially productive of mutual lustre, or mutual opprobrium.

When extraordinary affection arises between the child and the parent, or between brothers and sisters, it is to be attributed to the concurrent influence of those causes, which are productive of friendship, where there is no consanguinity.

The affection of the child to the parent and that of the parent to the child, obviously differ materially. In fact the latter has something peculiar in its origin, which will be found in a mixture of causes. On this account, we must afford it a separate analysis.

When under the influence of the principle here described, so little that is peculiar, or superiour, is necessary in the objects to which it causes our attachment, that we become fond of the scenery surrounding any dwelling where we have enjoyed any tolerable share of happiness, by associating the pleasing ideas excited by other causes, with the pleasurable sensations, inspired by the beauties of nature. By a species of personification, the trees and shrubs, and general verdure, appear to rejoice in their growth, and in the display of their shade or their beauties for our comfort or admiration, while we not only feel ourselves indebted to them for consequent accommodation, and pleasure; but find health and amusement, in the labour bestowed on their cultivation or defence. With the humblest domesticks, or animals officiating as ministers, or companions, to our wants, or comforts, we find a similar tie to arise. This however is the result of a coincidence of self-love, originating in reality, whereas the attachment excitedby inanimate objects originates in an imaginary coincidence of feeling: for though where these are concerned, there can be no reciprocity of impressions, at the same time tending individual and mutual gratification; such is our tendency to personify and to associate that we often act as if itwere imagined to exist.

The durability of the sources of friendship here enumerated, must in many cases be temporary; and in every instance dependent on chance. Fortunately, however, the attachments to which they give rise, are not always equally fortuitous or transient: for to the honour of human nature, whatever may be the sources of its impressions, they will continue, when their causes have ceased; though the period of continuance, will be widely various in different beings, according to the various excellence of that refined portion of the system, which is termed the heart. This delicate recipient of every moral impulse, but slowly relinquishes those habitudes which have been the result of powerful emotions. Hence consequences will remain, when their causes are involved in obscurity. Indeed to such as discover by careful an-

alysis, the paucity, feebleness and transitory nature of these sources of human attachments, their cessation will excite less surprise than their endurance: the explanation of which we must finally seek in the omnipotency of that mysterious first cause, who by the slightest means can produce the most beneficial effects: for however humble a coincidence of self-love arising from extraneous, and fortuitous causes, may appear as a source of friendship, by stimulating the better part of our nature, it becomes by far the most fertile, and universal source of human attachments: being at least the primary exciting cause, of consequences which are happy and noble.

ANALYTICUS.

(To be continued.)

VARIETY.

In the rough blast heaves the billow,
In the light air waves the willow;
Every thing of moving kind
VARIES with the veering wind:
What have I to do with thee,
Dull, unjoyous Constancy?

Sombre tale, and satire witty,
Sprightly glee, and doleful ditty,
Measur'd sighs, and roundelay,
Welcome all! but do not stay.
What have I to do with thee,
Dull, unjoyous Constancy?

An early acquaintance with the Classicks is the only foundation of good learning, and it is incumbent on all who direct the studies of youth, to have this great object continually before them, as a matter of the most serious concern; for that a good taste in literature is friendly both to publick and to private virtue, and, of course, tends to promote in no inconsiderable degree the glory of a nation; and that as the ancients are more or less understood, the principles and the spirit of sound erudition will ever be found to flourish or decay.

SONG BY DIBDIN.

Up from a loblolly boy, none was so cute
Of knowing things, most sorts I follard,
Ben Binnacle learn'd me to read and dispute
For Ben was a bit of a scollard;
Of the whole crisscross row, I in time know'd the words,
But the dear letter N, for my fancy,
For N stands for nature, and noble and North,
Neat, nimble, nine, nineteen and Nancy.

She soon was my wife, and I sail'd round the world,
To get prize money, where I could forage,
And for love wheresoever our Jack was unfurled,
I daunted them all with my courage;
For I now read in books about heroes and fame,
And for all sorts of rows got a fancy;
Sticking still to dear N, for N stands for name
Note, novel, neck, nocking and Nancy.

In the midst of this bustle I lost my poor friend,
And each object around me grew hateful,
For I know'd not false heart with a fair face to blend:
Nor had larning yet made me ungrateful,
I lik'd my friend well, and deplored him, what then?
My wife was the first in my fancy,
For though B stands for buck, brother, bottom and Ben,
Yet N stands for needle and Nancy.

Well I've weathered life's storms, and till laid a sheer hulk
With my absence again never shock her,
Thanks to fortune, at sea I've no need to break bulk
For I've plenty of shot in the locker;
Our kids play around us, and still to persue,
The letter so dear to my fancy,
Though nineteen twice told noons and nights but renew
The nice natty notion of Nancy.

For The Port Folio.

ORIGINAL POETRY.

THE ORPHAN.

'Twas on a wintry eve, when all was cold,
And the sad North blew desolation drear,
When fleecy storms along the heav'ns were rolled,
And Nature shook with tempest, as through fear;

Along the darkened air the snow was blown,
The troubled winds their anger murmured round,

And mad'ning clouds with wilder tempest torn,
Shed their cold wrath upon the frozen ground.

A lovely female at this lonely hour,
With steps bewildered, trod the trackless plain,
Her bosom heaved beneath the snowy shower,
And her hair floated wild, like one insane.

No neighbouring cottage cheered with taper bright,
Or hope imparted to her chilled breast,
But all around was lost in gloomy night—
Her trembling limbs could find no place of rest.

Her eyes one moment beamed with horrour wild,
As if by hideous spectres they were pained,
By grief then softened, they became more mild,
On her pale cheek the frozen tear remained.

Mercy, ye heavens! with anguish loud she cried,
"Oh, spare an Orphan mid this scene of death."
She hush'd; the cruel winds around her sigh'd,
And still the snow drove o'er the frigid heath.

Unpitying Elements! why spend thy rage
Upon the beauteous, helpless victim poor,
Oh woman, guardless, cease thy ire to wage,
Cease, on their feeble forms, your rage to pour.

Man looks with eager eyes his beauteous prey,
With smiles, besets the passage to her heart,
Nor can his villainy soft Pity stay,
He vows to love, but leaves a deadly smart.

Wide in the world the ruined hapless maid
Is by her faithless lover left to stray,
Whose cruelty, with scornful laugh, upbraid
The houseless object of his perfidy.

And will you join, with your too chilling arms
The unprotected maid t'o'erwhelm with wo,
Will you the care-wrought heart with fear alarm
And beat the breast when tears already flow.

Will you then aid t' increase the wretch's pain,
To press to earth the flower which droops its head?
Rather with vernal winds its life sustain,
And raise it healthful from its lowly bed.

For lovely woman, ever soft and kind,
Why send my pray'r where Mercy lends no ear,
Why should I plead with the unpitying wind,
When it resists th' orison of a tear.

Anguish had given way to milder grief,
She droop'd her head, exclaim'd in accents low,
On this drear heath I need not seek relief,
Here must I die, here must I end my wo.

Why should I grieve, alas! I have no home,
No kindred friends my wounded heart to heal,
And if I live, 'tis living but to roam
'Mong those who seldom for the wretched feel.

As the rude wind which passes with a sigh,
And heedless of its victim on is flown,
So the regardless cruel world moves by
And leaves the solitary wretch to moan.

On Julia then beat, thou inclement blast,
Wing'd by thy winds, her griefs this world may fly,
Rock'd by thy tempest, she will breathe her last,
And 'mid thy waving clamours learn to die.

Scarce from her lips had the sad accents fled
Ere she fell lifeless on the drifting snow;
The blast howl'd o'er her corse and frozen bed,
But with the blast fled hapless Julia's wo.

OWEN.

The price of The Port Folio is Six Dollars per annum, to be paid in advance.

Printed and Published, for the Editor, by SMITH & MAXWELL,

NO. 28, NORTH SECOND-STREET.